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REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 5-20, and 31-32 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1 and 10 have been amended. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, and on at least page 6, lines 5-8, and the Figures. Applicants respectfully assert that no new matter has been added and request reconsideration of the claims currently pending in the application.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-19, and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Pietsch, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,778,461). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

All claim elements, and their limitations, must be found in the prior art reference to maintain a rejection based on 35 U.S.C. §102. Claim 1, as amended, states that the polymer covers all of the substrate. As shown in Figure 3 of Pietsch, the polymer does not cover all of support ring 1. Claim 10, amended as suggested by the Examiner, states that the flexible composite component can be bent through a cross section of the flexible composite component. The composite of Pietsch, as shown in Figure 3, cannot be bent through its cross section. Applicants respectfully submit that Pietsch does not teach every element of claims 1 and 10, and therefore fails to anticipate claims 1 and 10.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-19, and 31 under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Pietsch, et al.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claim 20 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pietsch, et al. in view of Sumitomo Electric Co. (JP 59192366). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Three criteria must be met to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. First, there must be some suggestion or

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motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. Finally, the prior art reference, or combination of references, must teach or suggest all the claim limitations. MPEP § 2142. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection since the prior art fails to disclose all the claim limitations.

Claim 20 is dependent on claim 10. The rejection in the present Office action repeats the rejections of the Office action dated July 28, 2003, which appears to refer to claim 1 for this Section 103 rejection. As discussed above regarding claim 10, the composite in Pietsch cannot be bent through a cross section of the composite. Sumitomo does not teach a composite of claim 10, and thus does not supply the deficiency found in Pietsch. Since all of the claim limitations of claim 10 are not met, the combined disclosures of Pietsch and Sumitomo do not render the invention obvious. Claim 20 is dependent from claim 10, and therefore, the combination of references does not render the invention of claim 20 obvious.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Pietsch, et al. in view of Sumitomo Electric Co.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 9 and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pietsch, et al. in view of MacGregor (U.S. Patent No. 4,627,836). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

Claim 1, as amended, states that the polymer covers all of the substrate. As shown in Figure 3 of Pietsch, the polymer does not cover all of the support ring 1. MacGregor does not supply the deficiency in Pietsch. Since all of the claim limitations of claim 1 are not met, the combined disclosures of Pietsch and Sumitomo do not render the invention obvious. Claims 9 and 32 are

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dependent from claim 1, and therefore, the combination of the references also does not render the invention of claims 9 and 32 obvious.

Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of claims 9 and 32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Pietsch, et al. in view of MacGregor.

In view of the amendments and reasons provided above, it is believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early allowance of all pending claims.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' attorney of record, Hallie A. Finucane at (612) 334-3222.

The Director is authorized to charge any fee deficiency required by this paper or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 23-1123.

Respectfully submitted,

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